

AN OPEN LETTER FROM MARINA OSWALD PORTER

As far as Norman Mailer's book, "*Oswald's Tale*," is concerned, I have these comments to make:

I once heard that a member of the Warren Commission, Allen Dulles, remarked that Americans do not read. This is a time I'm very hopeful that his comment is true.

I took, once again, a chance through the so-called "established media" to try unraveling the mysteries of the controversy surrounding John Kennedy's assassination.

I truly believed Mr. Mailer represented a better part of this media and the literary world. I was flattered, and hopeful, that his expertise and life experiences would be instrumental in his ability to get inside Lee's psyche. It is said that when much is given—much is expected. That applies to all of us. I expected much more from Mr. Mailer.

But in the end, all that resulted was a bitter disappointment. Not because I'm not described in a flattering manner. Or not because I felt a personal betrayal (surely Mr. Mailer doesn't owe me anything). What distressed me most was the betrayal of the American people, who are owed the truth.

All of this collage of his book is based on distortion of events and vicious gossip. There was no real effort to get available evidence for Lee's defense. (In my cooperation with Mr. Mailer I attempted to pass on all the knowledge I have learned from good, decent researchers so their word could be heard.) If researchers and American people are willing to accept this entertainment in place of serious issues, I can only feel sorry for all of them.

A great opportunity was given (I do not mean by me, by any means) to him and he simply blew it. He chose to give a requiem for America instead.

It is a shame that the truth, the evidence, is only published in "home-made" newsletters which seldom reach a majority of the people.

Marina Porter

HAROLD WEISBERG

THE CHRONICLE INTERVIEW by Debra Crouch

Editors Note: Mr. Weisberg graciously took time from writing his new book, Mailer's Tale, (a rebuttal to Norman Mailer's An American Tale) to talk to The Assassination Chronicles recently. We are pleased to present his views and comments to our readers. (This article contains selections from a lengthy phone interview.)

Q: If you can help me get a better understanding of the history of Mailer's book? I understand you met him in 1973?

A: We met. At that time I offered him access to all I had. I've gotten at least one third of one million pages of once-secret records by more than a dozen Freedom of Information lawsuits and I make them available to everybody working in the field. And those I had then had not been published. I told him he was welcome to them. He said it was interesting and he'd be in touch and I never heard from him again.

On this new book, it was originally titled "*Oswald in Minsk*." After Mailer did his work in Minsk and (in one version I possessed) --he knew he had to do more. So he called that Volume I and then did Volume II, which is basically his selections of the work of others. Of those others it's basically people that had the same view he has. An approval of the basic mythology. And what he has done in the first part is embellish the interviews that Larry Schiller made in Minsk and the second part is his regeneration of a narrow prejudiced selection of the so-called "evidence of the crime" of which he ignores everything inconsistent with what he wanted to say to begin with.

Mailer says he began with the assumption that Oswald is innocent. I never had any special interest in Mailer. After people sent me things [clippings, etc.] where he talked about the assassination, I went over my file and I find that not beginning with 1973, at least, he was always pronouncing Oswald guilty. From time to time Mailer made the concession that Oswald didn't really seem to be guilty--and he should raise the question.

He never made any effort to find out what the official evidence is. He never made any effort beyond the establishing capability. Besides, that is the inappropriate way. He used Larry Schiller. I may be putting that the wrong way. The evidence is

that Larry Schiller used him. That is a strange circumstance for a man of fame and Mailer's reputation. In my opinion he was Larry Schiller's hired hand. Schiller made the arrangements in Minsk. The whole idea was Schiller's. This is true of everyone of these books. Schiller bought the rights to Gary Gilmore's execution, that became "*The Executioner's Song*." Schiller bought the rights to nude pictures of Marilyn Monroe and that was the basis of the book, "*Marilyn*." In fact, on that particular deal they had a packet, believe it or not, that they sold of all sorts of things that belonged to Monroe.

Anyway, they made a deal with the KGB. Somehow they got access to all the KGB had on Oswald. The KGB did have a file on Oswald. They had him under surveillance because they suspected he might be an American agent. There's nothing of any consequence in this part of Mailer's book. I published this same information in 1975 in an addition to my book, "*Post Mortem*," based on FBI records. Schiller and Mailer suppress in their book some of what those FBI records said.

They said, for example, that Oswald was openly anti-Soviet in the U.S.S.R. That's a strange picture of a rare Oswald. The part about Oswald in the U.S.--this is not new. I also published this information in 1965 in the first volume of my "*Whitewash*." book series. Oswald was anti-communist in the U.S. In the Marines, his favorite book was "*Animal Farm*." That's an anti-communist book. I published this information in 1967. So what I'm saying is that this is all phony.

All the details Mailer attributes to Marina's early life are disreputable. Most of these revelations have no meaning at all. To understand this, you have to realize Mailer believes that Oswald was the assassin. The fallacy is he can't prove it by the evidence so he's going to tell the true story of the real Oswald instead. However, the outrageous things he does to Marina. Almost none of what I read in the first part of the book has any relevance at all.

"LET THE WORD
GO FORTH..."

Q: Mailer leaves the reader dangling after presenting evidence that Oswald was watched by intelligence agencies. Why do we assume that "intelligence" agents act *intelligently*? Wouldn't a Lee Harvey Oswald be an especially attractive toy to these type of men?

A: The reality is that the late George deMohrenshild played a role as Lee's handler. Mailer uses that term, "handler," without knowing what the meaning is.

You may remember that Earl Goltz was a reporter for *The Dallas Morning News*. He related to me that when people were still interested in talking to deMohrenshild after he got out of Parkland Hospital, they were told to leave him alone. His health was very delicate and he should not be bothered. No one paid any attention and consequently, they drove the man to suicide. The pressure of the whole situation was too much for him.

It concerns me that people make light of the assassination and do not try to learn about it. Schiller or Mailer didn't seem to try to really learn about it. Look at Mailer's own bibliography. What do you find there? Believe it or not, he's got two novels! I have never heard of a work of non-fiction that used novels as an authoritative source. It includes the published work of the House "Assassins" Committee, the published work of the Warren Commission and of the official documents, that's all. It doesn't include a single reference to any of the hundreds of thousands of records that were readily available to him including here [Mr. Weisberg's papers], at the various reading rooms, and at the National Archives. It includes none of the work of the Rockefeller Commission, none of the commission records--there were 200 feet of them that they didn't publish. What it does contain on the two short pages is astounding.

The first book is a collection of writings by Ralph Waldo Emerson. You've got Epstein's book that supports the official mythology. That apparently is what Mailer likes. Another is *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler. You've got a wide compilation of weird sources.

Q: That is another issue I wanted to ask you about. Why would Mailer compare Lee Oswald with Adolf Hitler?

A: It's irrational. There is Mailer painting a picture of Oswald being motivated by a desire for fame. Mailer says he liked and respected Kennedy but by killing him, he got fame that he could not have gotten any other way.

He says if Oswald wouldn't have got caught, he would have no fame--so he got himself caught. It makes no sense at all. But Mailer is not the first to propose this motivation for Oswald.

Q: What about Oswald's visit to Mexico City? The treatment of that visit and Silvia Duran (who spoke English and could have easily been interviewed) is simply a very short chapter in the book.

A: Oswald knew that it would be more difficult to get to the Soviet Union through Cuba than any other place in the world except the United States. He'd have no trouble through Canada, for example. He could have gone directly to the Soviet Union if he had the visa. He may or may not have believed that the Cubans would give him one. He wasn't very bright if he did. However, we know that Oswald was not a political infant. He was politically pretty sophisticated. There are all sorts of things about it we just can't explain. We just don't know. But it's hard to imagine that he acted entirely on his own. Maybe he did -- we have no way of knowing.

This is the way I begin my book that is on sale now, *Never Again*. The government never investigated the crime and never intended to. I have documentation of that with which I begin my first chapter. It amounts to a government conspiracy not to investigate the crime. J. Edgar Hoover immediately ordained Lee Oswald as the assassin. It was the only way to cover his own reputation because he could then say no one could penetrate a conspiracy of one. There is no such thing. So, therefore, the FBI did not fail. It was the portrait he painted of the FBI all his life.

When you don't have an official investigation that deals with the significant information, that avoids all possible leads, there are then no leads for the people to follow. I'm afraid too much conjecture is involved that confuses the people even more. So, I don't think I can say if the trip to Mexico City has any significance at all. We may never know what the significance of Oswald's trip was.

Q: Lastly, I found the Sylvia Odio section was confusing and another example of Mailer's leaving the reader dangling. He doesn't seem to be able to make this episode go away. Are you going to revisit these types of subjects in the book and clear them up?

A: In a way, yes. There will be a long section on Sylvia Odio. In my book, *Case Open*, I was disappointed that

only about 25% of what I wrote was published. What was not published is where I used Posner's book as a key prosecution brief and responded to it as a defense lawyer would using only the official evidence. I'm hoping to be able to assemble that type of data at the end. To a degree I'm hoping to

use what I've already done. I proved more than that Oswald could not have killed the president--but that the *official evidence* proves he could not have. What I'm saying is that officialdom knew. They knew they were framing him. © JFK LANCER

ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING IN NEW ORLEANS WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28TH

The Assassination Records Review Board, an independent federal agency appointed by President Clinton to oversee the identification and release of records related to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, will hold a public hearing in New Orleans, Louisiana on Wednesday, June 28, 1995.

The public hearing will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the third floor auditorium of the Old U.S. Mint Building, located at 400 Esplanade Avenue. The Board will hear testimony on the identification and location of assassination records in New Orleans and receive an update by a representative from the National Archives on the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection.

Event: Assassination Records Review Board Public Hearing
Date: Wednesday, June 28, 1995
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Old U.S. Mint Building
Third Floor Auditorium
400 Esplanade Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

Witnesses scheduled to testify at the Board's public hearing include:

The Honorable Lindy Boggs; former Congresswoman and wife of the late Congressman Hall Boggs, who was a member of the Warren Commission.

Wayne Everard; Archivist, City of New Orleans Archives. He oversees records at the New Orleans Public Library that are from the investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy conducted by former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison.

Dr. Michael L. Kurtz; Professor of History at Southeastern Louisiana and author of *Crime of the Century*, a 1982 book on the Kennedy Assassination.

Stephen Tyler; producer and director of the 1992 documentary, "*He Must Have Something: The Real Story of Jim Garrison's Investigation of the Assassination of JFK*."

Cynthia Anne Wegmann; daughter of the late Edward Wegmann, a member of the legal team which defended Clay Shaw at his 1969 assassination conspiracy trial.

In addition, **Steven D. Tilley**; the National Archives and Records Administration's JFK Assassination Records Collection Liaison will give an update on the Collection.

The Assassination Records Review Board was established by The President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Act of 1992, which was signed into law by President George Bush. The five members of the Board were appointed by President Clinton, confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and sworn in on April 11, 1994. The law gives the Review Board the mandate and the authority to identify, secure, and make available all records related to the assassination of President Kennedy. It is the responsibility of the Board to determine which records are to be made public immediately and which ones will have postponed release dates. The Review Board consists of the following members:

John R. Tunheim, Chair; Minnesota Chief Deputy Attorney General.

Dr. Henry F. Graff; Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia University.

Dr. Kermit L. Hall; Dean, College of Humanities, and Professor of History at The Ohio State University.

Dr. William L. Joyce; Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University

The Review Board has until October 1, 1996 to fulfill its mandate, plus an additional year at the Board's discretion to complete its responsibilities.

VIDEO REVIEWS

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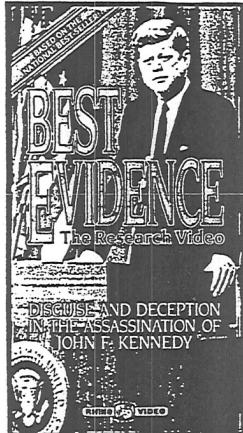
Editor's Note: Typically, reviews are on newer items, but since many of our readers are new to the case, there is a need to revisit these videos.

BEST EVIDENCE, THE RESEARCH VIDEO

by David Lifton

36 MIN, Rhino Video, 1990

Lifton is a master craftsman and wrote every word of this video with great precision and commitment. This work will live in history as a major evidence document.



Chief of the Day at Bethesda, Dennis David, states that he unloaded a cheap, gray, 60 lb., Vietnam-style casket containing President Kennedy's body from a black unmarked ambulance. Jerry Custer, the Bethesda X-ray technician who X-rayed the President's body, states that as he was walking out of the autopsy room with an armload of just taken X-rays of the President, he saw Mrs. Kennedy arrive at the hospital with a 1000 lb. bronze ceremonial casket in a Navy ambulance. The thesis of the video is that this second ambulance was transporting an empty casket and that the President's body was altered between Dallas and Bethesda.

Aubrey Rike, Dallas funeral attendant, is shown saying he placed Kennedy's body in a very expensive 1000 lb. ceremonial bronze casket with the body wrapped in sheets. Paul O'Connor, who removed Kennedy's body at Bethesda, states that when he removed the body from the cheap casket, it was zipped up inside a plastic body bag.

X-ray technician Custer and O'Connor both emphatically swear that the entire brain of Kennedy was missing upon arrival in Bethesda, so

that two fists could be placed in the cavity. The Dallas doctors, claims Lifton, state only half that amount of brain was missing at the Dallas Parkland Hospital.

Highly recommended.

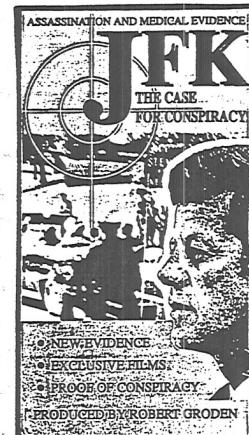
JFK: THE CASE FOR CONSPIRACY

by Robert Groden

1 HR 43 MIN, New Frontier Video, 1993

This is a remarkable video, but it may be too specialized for the average viewer. It deals exclusively with the technicalities of forensic evidence concerning the direction of the shots. Witnesses who saw the back of Kennedy's head blown off are filmed repetitively, and evidence is too often repeated.

Extensive testimony is given by witnesses on the wounds in the back of the President's head. Some of the witnesses appear to contradict the views of Lifton in the *Best Evidence*



video, though not clearly so. Students of this point will want to listen carefully to every word of the witnesses in Dallas as to the size of the exit wound in the rear of the President's head.

All of the Parkland doctors were shown the Bethesda autopsy photographs and *without exception* each states on camera that they are fraudulent and incorrect. The Bethesda photographers who took the true autopsy photos state that the official government photos are fakes. Further, the X-ray photos and the autopsy photos do not even agree with each other.

Groden argues convincingly that the House Assassinations Committee released fraudulent photos, omitting bullet holes and *drawing a tiny entrance wound in the back of Kennedy's head at the cowlick where one never existed!*

This is noble research of the highest order and note must be taken of Mr. Groden for his tremendous thoroughness.

DEEP POLITICS IN THE UNITED STATES: THE BANANA CONNECTION

Interviews with Peter Dale Scott, Part One
55 MIN, Cinema Guild, 1993

This extremely interesting video reveals the advanced analysis of a cultured historian. This is not an evidence video, but rather a history of the hidden agendas and schemes of the handful of wealthy and powerful capitalists who for centuries have secretly controlled the wealth of this hemisphere.

Scott teaches us that our visible government mainly receives its orders from a wealthy group which has a long history of alliances with organized crime and the CIA since the latter's inception as the OSS.

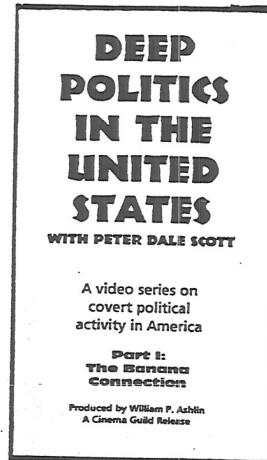
The deep political structure that ordered President Kennedy's murder has been controlling politics and governments and ordering assassinations since late last century; Kennedy's murder fits a routine *Banana Republic* pattern.

Scott reasons that if J. Edgar Hoover or top CIA officials had personally planned the JFK murder, they surely would not have chosen one of their paid agents as the patsy. They would have chosen someone untraceable to them. Scott also

Tom Hudson has also reviewed the videos: *The JFK Conspiracy*, *The Plot to Kill Kennedy*, *The JFK Assassination: The Jim Garrison Tapes*, *The Mark Lane Tapes*, *Reasonable Doubt*, *The Men Who Killed Kennedy*, *The Two Kennedy's*, *Beyond JFK*, *The Assassination of JFK* and *The Secret Files on J. Edgar Hoover*.

thinks that Oswald may have been paid by anti-Castro Cubans to distribute pro-Castro leaflets in order to arouse support for their cause. [Would an agent of the CIA or FBI be framed as a patsy in order to persuade those agencies to co-operate in a total government and media cover-up? Just asking!]

Scott states that Army Intelligence should be investigated more thoroughly in connection with Kennedy's death. Many Dallas Special Security Police officers, apparently key figures in the cover-up were members of the Army Intelligence or the Army's Intelligence Reserve, which had a large contingent in Dallas. One of their agents, James

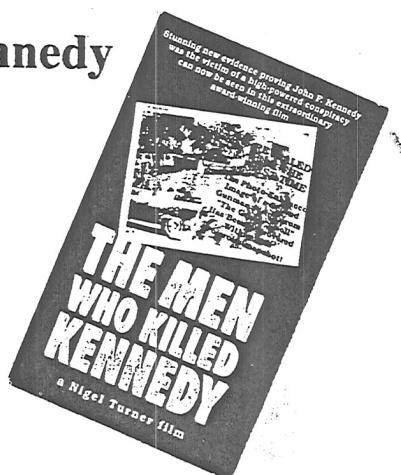


Powell, was allowed into the sealed-off Book Depository 6th floor right after the assassination and was instrumental in finding the Manlicher Carcano rifle and linking it to Oswald. Marina Oswald's Russian translator, who distorted her words in important ways, was picked by an Army Intelligence officer.

Army Intelligence played a major and special role in covering up major assassination evidence without needing to do so to save face. **Highly recommended.**

The Men Who Killed Kennedy

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PAUL C. PETERS, MD: THIRTY YEARS AFTER WARREN

by Brad J. Parker

During the writing of his book, *Case Closed*, Gerald Posner seems to have conveniently solved the mystery of the contradictions in President Kennedy's wounds between Dallas and Bethesda. Physicians who treated the President in Dallas recanted their original statements, claiming that they did not examine the wounds in detail (Posner 309).

Mr. Posner leaves the impression that Ronald C. Jones, M.D. has also amended his previous testimony after an interview with the doctor in April of 1992 (Posner 312). However, when interviewed two months later, Dr. Jones stated that "I would stand by my original impression" of the wounds sustained by the President (Jones June 19, 1992). At first glance, it appears as though Mr. Posner has reported a change of opinion by Paul C. Peters, M.D. However, subsequent contact with Dr. Peters by this author suggests that perhaps Mr. Posner did not fully explore Dr. Peters' memory of or opinion on the President's head wound.

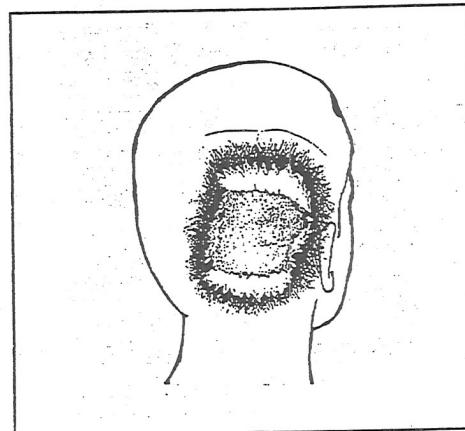
In testifying before the Warren Commission on March 24, 1964, Dr. Peters stated that he "noticed that there was a large defect in the occiput." He went on to describe what "appeared to be a bone loss and brain loss...in the right occipitoparietal area." When asked if he observed a wound below the large occipital injury, Dr. Peters said that he did not. Even though he did not actually observe the throat wound prior to the tracheotomy, he apparently had reason to believe that it was an entrance wound. "We speculated as to whether he had been shot once or twice because we saw the entry in the throat and noted the large occipital wound," he told Arlen Specter. It is not surprising that Mr. Specter did not return to the issue of "the entry in the throat" (6WCH 71).

Mr. Peters subsequently described the severity of the intercranial injury to numerous researchers. "I could see the occipital lobes clearly, and so I know it was that far back on the skull. I could look inside the skull, and I thought it looked like the cerebellum was injured, or missing, because the occipital lobes seemed to rest almost on the foramen magnum." Furthermore, he stated that "the

cerebellum, and brainstem, might have been injured, or missing" (Lifton 324).

Gerald Posner's interview with Dr. Peters failed to yield any specific location for the wound. "The only thing I would say is that over the last twenty-eight years, I now believe the head wound was more forward than I first placed it. More to the side than to the rear." After clearly describing the damage to the cerebellum, and perhaps the brainstem, in previous statements, he told Posner, "I saw the photograph of the brain when I was in Washington for the "Nova" program, and I saw the cerebellum was depressed, but not lacerated or torn. It was definitely pressed down and that would be that damage I referred to in 1964" (Posner 311). And with that, Mr. Posner asserts that the medical controversy resulted from errors of epidemic proportions among the Parkland trauma team.

In a March 4, 1994 letter to the author, Dr. Peters stated that "the wound, I still maintain, was occipitoparietal..." In commenting on a 1966



Drawing by Dr. McClelland

drawing by Robert N. McClelland, M.D. (see figure) which depicts a posterior skull wound, he wrote that the injury in the drawing "extend(s) too far down toward the neck." "I believe the drawing pictures the wound a little further posterior than it actually was." "At the time of the surgery itself,

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we could see a large hole in the occipitoparietal area" (letter to the author).

Addressing the issue of his prior descriptions of the cerebellum, Dr. Peters said that "the brain I was shown" [Editors Note: We can only infer Dr. Peters is referring to a *photo* of the brain and not the brain itself. He did not state such information in his letter to Brad Parker.] when he reviewed the autopsy materials in 1988 showed the cerebellum to be "severely depressed on the side of entry of the bullet" (letter to the author). He told Gerald Posner that it was this depression of the cerebellum to which he had mistakenly referred as a laceration in previous statements (Posner 311). Regardless of its condition, the cerebellum must have been observed in Trauma Room One, as it is highly unlikely that he would describe a structure which was not exposed. It is interesting to note that the view of the brain through the wound described in the autopsy report would not have provided a view of either the cerebellum or brainstem (WCR 538-546).

In spite of many of his colleagues, who have chosen to change their descriptions of the head wound by appearing in *JAMA* and *Case Closed*, Dr. Peters maintains that his original opinion is essentially correct. The massive injury involved "the outer portion of the occipital area and part of the parietal area of the skull. I have not changed my mind. The review of the autopsy findings at the National Archives 25 years after the injury merely reinforces my statement which I gave to the Warren Commission. I told them there was a 7 cm. (at least) hole in the occipitoparietal region" (letter to

the author). Interestingly, the autopsy findings to which he was referring should have reflected a thirteen centimeter wound to the right temporoparietal skull (WCR 538-546). One is left only to speculate as to what Dr. Peters observed in the National Archives which reinforces his description of an injury which directly contradicts the autopsy findings.

SOURCES:

Jones, Ronald C., M.D., Chief of Surgery, Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, Author's telephone interview, June 19, 1992

Lifton, David S., *Best Evidence*, New York, Carroll and Graf Publishers, Inc., 1988.

McClelland, Robert N., M.D. Professor of Surgery, U.T. Southwestern Medical School, 1966 drawing of President Kennedy's head wound.

Peters, Paul C., M.D., Professor and Chairman, Division of Urology, Department of Surgery, U.T. Southwestern Medical School, Letter to the author, March 4, 1994.

Posner, Gerald, *Case Closed*, New York, Random House, 1993.

The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, *Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964

ED HOFFMAN'S CHANGING STORY

by Ron Friedrich

"Has anyone noticed that Mr. Hoffman's story keeps changing each time he's interviewed?"

There is a great deal of truth in the premise of that question which was posted recently on the Internet. There are significant differences in details of the story that is reported each time Ed Hoffman is interviewed. They are the same sort of differences that arise when you play the party game "Telephone," in which a message is relayed through a series of participants, and the final form of the message has little resemblance to the author's intent. Since Ed Hoffman is deaf, he relies on sign language interpreters. And as a professional, certified sign language interpreter, I know from first hand experience that interpreters make mistakes. Ed Hoffman's interpreters and those who print his story are no less prone to error than anyone else.

Because English is Ed's *second language, a foreign language which he has never heard*, he is often unaware of the misrepresentation of his testimony, even after it has been submitted to print. But once a factual error attributed to Ed Hoffman is in print, the misinformation is spread, quoted, and misquoted. And should Ed contradict a published mis-translation, He is accused of "changing his story." In his battle for the truth as an eye witness to the JFK assassination, Ed has gotten hit by more than his share of "friendly fire." Allow me to cite two documentable examples.

The first researcher to publish Ed Hoffman's story, and bring it to public view, reported that Ed saw a man dressed in "a dark suit, tie, and *overcoat*" standing behind the wooden fence at Dealey Plaza. This description has been quoted from this published source time and time again. Ed Hoffman was given a copy of the video tape of his informal interview with the researcher who published this version of his testimony. As I view the tape, it looks like a difficult experience for everyone. The researcher had unwittingly recruited and unprofessional, uncertified interpreter (and even certified ones make mistakes), who was distracted with a lot of interference from relatives present at the interview. Also, the researcher appears

unfamiliar with the proper way to conduct an interview with a translator, which contributed to a breakdown of clear communication. Under these conditions, it is surprising that the researcher got so much of the story right!

The actual interview went as follows:

Interpreter (voice): "The other man who fired the gun was in a suit."

Researcher: "Did he have an overcoat?"

Interpreter (signs): "Did he have a coat?" (The sign for "coat" also means "jacket.")

Ed (signs): "Yes, a nice coat, [fingerspells:] S-U-I-T."

Interpreter (voice): "It was an overcoat... suit... nice overcoat."

(Interpreter error!)

Ed never mentioned an "overcoat" in this or any other interview, except to deny that he saw one whenever he is asked about it as a result of the published error.

About a decade later Ed Hoffman was interviewed on video tape again, this time by a British production team. I am told that the resulting project has been broadcast through the A&E cable television channel. The video was not captioned, nor did anyone ever bother to interpret the voice track for Ed so he could see the words that are being attributed to him, and see how his story had been mistranslated once again. Ed was filmed telling parts of his story in abbreviated form (editor's privilege) from four different perspectives: (1) from the freeway bridge, looking toward the fence, (2) at the fence, mimicking what he saw the blue-suited gunman do, (3) at the railroad track, mimicking what he saw the man in the railroad uniform do, and (4) back out on the freeway, looking south toward the railroad bridge. The voice

track gives Ed eloquent, colorful narration to his sign. Unfortunately, what is voiced frequently does not match what Ed signs.

There is one glaring error of interpretation that occurs twice, which distorts the facts of the testimony. The voice translation of Ed's story quotes Ed as saying that the gunman *walked* from the fence to the railroad tracks. And then voice translation quotes Ed as saying that the man who carried off the rifle in the tool box "*walked slowly* down the tracks to the waiting railroad cars."

What does Ed sign in those two scenes?

In the first, he signs nothing. He is filmed simply mimicking what he saw the gunman do. And in this video, you see Ed walking from the fence to the tracks, as if carrying a rifle. But in the video of Ed being interviewed 10 years earlier, Ed mimes the scenario by *running*. Why the change? If you were to view the newer film in Ed's presence, he would be quick to tell you, "Really, the man ran, but my knees are bad, and I can't run now." Ed has suffered injuries to both knees in an industrial accident, and is physically unable to fully mime the part. But when he simply tells his story in American Sign Language, he signs "run," not "walk."

As for the second of the two scenes in question, Ed first mimes dismantling the rifle,

placing it in a "tool box" (he fingerspells the two words), then Ed stands, and signs literally, "*He-goes-that-way-to train*" (only two signs; note that verbs in ASL are formed with direction, not tense). Contrary to the voice interpretation created for Ed's mime, Ed's story always has been that the two men ran, not walked (except for the gunman, after passing the off the rifle, walked casually back to the fence to mingle with the crowd, as correctly voiced in this video).

Ed Hoffman is kind-hearted enough to let translation errors published by supportive researchers go without public challenge. Ed is not inclined to write an article such as this, defending himself against his friends. What causes Ed grief is when cynics use published translation errors as an attack on Ed's own credibility as a witness, and an attack on his very character. Of all the published accounts of Ed's testimony, there is none as complete and accurate as that found in the first chapter of Bill Sloan's *Breaking the Silence*. Oh, yes, Sloan did slip on a couple very minor details unrelated to the assassination. But what he describes of Ed's experience on November 22, 1963, is consistent with the way Ed Hoffman has always told his story in American Sign Language.

Editor's Note: Read more on Ed Hoffman's eyewitness account confusion in our next issue.

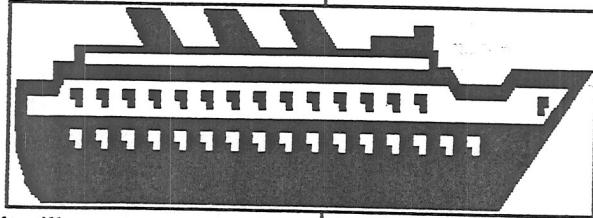
News From Across the Pond

by Ian Griggs

Despite a few recent problems, the research scene across the Atlantic continues to flourish. Both individually and collectively, many British researchers are actively engaged in studying various aspects of the case.

A very strong link has been established between leading British researchers and *The Assassination Chronicles* and it is anticipated that the results of British research will appear regularly in these pages in the near future.

Current projects under way include the study of "lost" or "forgotten" witnesses, some very serious interpretation of what went on in Trauma



Room One at Parkland-and some interesting observations and findings on the sequence of shots in Dealey Plaza.

Many of these studies will cover areas so far ignored or neglected by past researchers and it is hoped that these contributions will add to the overall knowledge and understanding of the case.

The next issue of *The Assassination Chronicles* will include British researcher,

Rick Caster's account of how he successfully traced, met, and interviewed Warren Caster (no relation!) -- the man who brought two rifles into the TSBD on November 20, 1963 -- and also knew Lee Harvey Oswald.

Fletcher Prouty in New Zealand

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In 1992, Birch Lane Press released L. Fletcher Prouty's *JFK*. Prouty, a retired United States Air Force Colonel, previously authored *The Secret Team*. This 1973 paperback revealed much about the deceit and deception within the Central Intelligence Agency. Prouty became the model for Oliver Stone's character X played by Donald Sutherland for the movie *JFK*. As a devotee of *The Secret Team*, I assumed Prouty would bring the same level of objectivity to *JFK*. I was surprised when I ran across the following on page 308:

"In a long account in the *Christchurch Star* about Lee Harvey Oswald -- which included that fine studio portrait in a business suit, white shirt, and tie -- these press services provided, and the Star published some very interesting information.

According to the account, Lee Harvey Oswald:

- "defected to the Soviet Union in 1959"
- "returned to the United States in 1962"
- "has a [Russian] wife and child"
- "worked in a factory in Minsk"
- "went to the USSR following discharge from the Marine Corps"
- "became disillusioned with life there [in the USSR]"
- "Soviet authorities had given him permission to return with his wife and child"
- "had been chairman of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee"
- "and much more."

"By what process could the wire services have acquired, collated, evaluated, written, and then transmitted all that material about an unknown young man named Lee Harvey Oswald within the first moments following that tragic and 'unexpected' event -- even before the police had charged him?"
(1)

Prouty is not logical in his efforts to convince us that the communication was extremely swift. In my opinion, he needs to recheck his times as well as press sources operating at that moment in time. Additionally, Oswald was neither the unknown young man Prouty claims nor was it difficult to obtain details on Oswald once he was taken into custody. First consider the time zone shift.

Prouty admits, "For those of us who just happened to be in far-off Christchurch, New Zealand, for example, the Kennedy assassination took place at seven-thirty on the morning of Saturday, November 23, 1963." (2)

He then continues, "As soon as possible, the *Christchurch Star* hit the streets with an "Extra" edition." (3) Read a little further and you discover "as soon as possible" becomes "This newspaper ran an "Extra" edition that was on the streets before noon in Christchurch." (4)

Prouty creates confusion by maintaining the release of information on Oswald could not occur until Oswald was charged with the crime. Any student of the Kennedy assassination remembers Oswald wasn't charged for many hours and then for the Tippit shooting. He was, however, taken into custody at 1:50 PM. (8:50 AM, New Zealand time.) The Warren Report referring to Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry's testimony at 12H30, the testimony of reporter Glen King at 15H55 and King's notations in Decker Exhibit four (DE4) shows the press had knowledge Oswald was in custody "within an hour of Oswald's arrest." (10:00 AM, New Zealand time.) In fact, King points out there was a live TV news broadcast concerning Oswald at 3:26 PM (10:26 AM, New Zealand time.)

To me and by Prouty's own admission the newspaper had at least two hours to get the "extra" on the street. To make this perfectly clear, we can convert Dallas events to Prouty's time zone (New Zealand). Kennedy is shot at 7:30 AM. Oswald is taken into custody at 9:00 AM. The press knew of Oswald's being in custody by 10:00 a.m., and could start their research on him. King's live TV coverage commenced at 10:26 AM. In essence, the New Zealand newspaper would have from shortly after 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM to get the "Extra" out. Remember an "Extra" is not a complete newspaper. It is a quick compilation of immediate facts on a

specific subject. The "Extra" is wrapped around the previous issue.

We next tackle the question of "By what process could the wire services have acquired, collated, evaluated, written, and then transmitted all that material about an unknown young man named Lee Harvey Oswald . . ."

Prouty is old enough to remember that Oswald was not unknown. In November of 1959 the newspapers were alive with articles about young men deserting to the Soviet Union. In a rather brief period there were detailed reports not only about Oswald's defection but that of Nicholas Petrulli and Robert Webster. There was also extensive coverage of each individuals return to the United States during May and June of 1962.

Specific to Prouty's claims about Oswald:

- "defected to the Soviet Union in 1959"

This was reported along with the Petrulli/Webster defections in The Washington Post, 11/01/59, The Washington Evening Star, 11/25/59 and The New York Times, 11/01/59.

- "returned to the United States in 1962"

Reported in The Washington Post, 06/09/62 with additional notes that a total of three Americans had returned home. Besides Oswald, Webster returned as an immigrant in May, 1962 and David Johnson returned with his wife and twin sons within a week of his defection.

- "has a [Russian] wife and child"

Reported in The Washington Post, 06/09/62.

- "worked in a factory in Minsk"

I was unable to find an appropriate New York or Washington press citation for this item although it was well reported in the Dallas/Fort Worth newspapers.

- "went to the USSR following discharge from the Marine Corps"

The Washington Post, 11/01/59, The Washington Post, 11/16/59, The Washington Evening Star, 11/25/59 and The New York Times, 11/01/59.

- "became disillusioned with life there [in the USSR]"

The Washington Post, 11/01/59, The Washington Evening Star, 11/25/59.

Mr. Prouty forgets that Oswald on or about August 10, 1963, while in New Orleans had "approached the city editor of *The States Item* newspaper, cajoling him into giving more coverage to the FPCC campaign." (5) Later he had an altercation with some anti-Castro Cubans which resulted in his arrest. On August 16, Oswald was filmed by WDSU and WWL passing out FPCC leaflets. He was contacted by the local radio station and appeared espousing Marxist and FPCC views on the radio show *Latin Listening Post*.

"In a long account in the *Christchurch Star* about Lee Harvey Oswald -- which included that fine studio portrait in a business suit, white shirt, and tie -- these press services provided..."

There are many legitimate pro-conspiracy researchers that spend much time refuting the distortions printed by many sensationalist authors such as Prouty. Prouty only succeeds in confusing the novices and clouding the historical record. As friend and fellow researcher Harold Weisberg once said "If it won't sell, if it doesn't fit their theories then they will make it up."

(1) L. Fletcher Prouty, *JFK* (New York, NY: Birch Lane Press, 1992), pp. 308-309.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 306

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) Anthony Summers, *Conspiracy* (New York: Paragon House, 1989), p. 272.

"THERE WILL ALWAYS BE HONEST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FRIENDS; AND THEY SHOULD BE FREELY AND FRANKLY DISCUSSED; BUT THESE ARE DIFFERENCES OF MEANS, NOT ENDS. THEY ARE DIFFERENCES OF APPROACH, NOT SPIRIT."

JFK, July 2nd, 1963

ROGER AND ME

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To paraphrase the opening of Jim Marrs' book *Crossfire: the Plot that Killed Kennedy*, don't trust this article. In fact, when it comes to the assassination of President Kennedy, don't trust any one source or even the basic evidence and testimony. Belief and trust are part of the problem. Just because we believe there is a conspiracy, that doesn't mean there is one. And just because we don't believe in conspiracies, that doesn't mean they don't exist.

There are those who have been telling us that if we believe there is a conspiracy we are, at best, irresponsible; and at worst, insane (or paranoid, a word they may misuse to mean the same thing). And there are those who have been telling us that if we believe Oswald acted alone, we are at best, naive; and at worst, criminally insane (or part of the cover-up, which may mean the same thing).

"Just because we believe there is a conspiracy, that doesn't mean there is one. And just because we don't believe in conspiracies, that doesn't mean they don't exist."

The first thing we can be certain of is that one of those two beliefs (conspiracy or no conspiracy) is the truth. The assassination did happen. It happened only one way, and it happened that way only once. Therefore, the second thing we can be certain of is that some of those who are telling us these things as fact are lying. They are lying to us and they are lying about us. Some of these liars are our teachers; some of them are our bosses; some of them are our city council representatives; some of them are our house and senate representatives; and some of them are our country's vice presidents and presidents. Everyday for thirty-plus years, these liars have been making decisions that effect us.

For Hitler and the Nazis, lying was a matter of policy. They knew that if they lied often enough, a certain percentage of their lies would be believed. And if one big lie were told often enough,

much of the population would eventually come to believe it. That was the Nazi theory of propaganda — a theory, I might add, very familiar to two members of the Warren Commission: Allen Dulles, and John J. McCloy. So we have to know who the liars are. And the only way to do that is to judge them by the facts — not the other way around.

Aside from knowing who is lying to us, why should we care about who killed the thirty-fifth president of our country? The answer to that question is the same as the reason we should care about history. That reason was expressed well by David McCullough, the author of the recent best-selling biography of Harry S. Truman, in a speech he gave at the National Archives in 1993.

The reason we should care, he said, is because, "Always, always, one thing leads to another. That is fundamentally, irrevocably, one of the most obvious and most important lessons of history. One thing leads to another. It is why it is so important to understand the chronology of events; or the chronology of a life."

It's also true as a lesson of history that nothing happens in a vacuum — nothing. Nor does anything have to have happened the way it happened. We are often taught history in such a fashion as if everything happened on a track from the moment events began until the present day. And never ever was that so."

Events, individual lives, the course of national destiny can go off in any number of directions at any point along the way, and for all kinds of unexpected and surprising reasons. The people who are involved in the event at the time don't know how it's going to come out anymore than we do right now."¹

Mr. McCullough went on to say, "We cannot have the arrogance of looking down on them because they didn't know how it was going to come out or because they didn't know what we know now."

But, as important as it is to know these things, when it comes to the assassination of President Kennedy — believe what we might — as a country we don't know the chronology of events. We don't know which events and individuals, or even whether events and individuals significantly

changed the course of our national destiny. We don't know what the unexpected and surprising reasons are. As a country, we know no more now than we did in 1963. It was sometime in the eighties that history books started to reflect this uncertainty, repeating the Warren Commission findings while at the same time calling Oswald the alleged lone assassin. And it was just a couple of years ago that the respected *Pelican History of the United States* began saying that Kennedy was killed as the result of a conspiracy. If nothing else, the debate that began with the filming of Oliver Stone's *JFK*, and which continues today, reveals the country's historical dilemma.

Six years, five months, and over a hundred books ago, I asked myself a question. How much is it possible to learn about the assassination of John F. Kennedy? The twenty-fifth anniversary was looming and I knew from past experience, having been interested in the mystery since that day in Dallas, that there would be the inevitable barrage of information, misinformation, and disinformation from the advertising/entertainment/news media. This time I was determined to be able to put what I would hear and see in the next nine weeks into one of those three categories.

I started reading and re-reading everything I could get my hands on. My only rule was to read something every day about the assassination. The twenty-fifth anniversary came and went, and the only thing I knew for sure was that, despite my casual study of the case for most of those years, I still had misconceptions about it; and I still had huge gaps in my knowledge of it.

In the past, I had always been able to develop informed opinions about the things I studied: art, dinosaurs, plate tectonics,

"I started reading and re-reading everything I could get my hands on."

extraterrestrial life, whether or not to wear a seat belt, or whatever. In some cases, after studying a subject, when my personal opinion was not the accepted view, it eventually became so. In those instances I felt I had developed what Ernest Hemingway called, "a built-in, shockproof crap detector."²² It made me confident enough in my ability to educate myself (which is supposedly the goal of a formal education) to attempt to develop an opinion about the Kennedy assassination. One with

which I could feel secure. So I stuck to my rule and read something about it every day.

After the first few books I actually became more confused. After ten books, I began to get a feel for the subject. A learning curve had started to kick in. The more I learned, the more I was able to learn. I started catching authors in mistakes and in a few cases, out-right lies. I learned that, though there are disagreements about specific details, there are facts (usually ignored by the media) which are undisputed among honest students of both the assassination and the two major federal investigations of it. I learned that — despite all the loose talk about theories — among the honest students whose works I've read, there are no theories in the derogatory sense — only a determined effort to account for the facts by considering *all* of the evidence.

"As I was learning these facts

I increasingly felt the need to do something other than read — I was learning that knowledge compels action."

As I was learning these facts I increasingly felt the need to do something other than read — I was learning that knowledge compels action. But I knew that I was not yet knowledgeable enough to start investigating any of the loose ends myself. I thought, at most, I would resolve my own personal questions about the assassination and watch events develop from an informed perspective. Two years went by before I contacted another researcher and offered to help. But before that — nine months into my daily reading program — something happened that eventually took me beyond both reading and assisting in research. I didn't know it at the time, but I had stumbled upon potential new evidence in the case.

By May 1989, I was familiar enough with the story of a getaway car seen in Dealey Plaza (a story that was dismissed by the Warren Commission) to take more than a passing glance at an old Rambler station wagon parked on the UT campus among the late model Hondas and Toyotas.

It stuck out like a sore thumb. But it interested me because it was the same make and model as the getaway car I had been reading about. I

wasn't crazy enough to think it was actually that car, though. I was just glad to have a mental picture of a Rambler station wagon from that era. I had never really seen one. There were, however, some strange things about it that made me wonder whether or not its owner also knew the story about the Dealey Plaza getaway car and its role in the assassination.

"The Warren Commission...choose not to believe Craig took part in Oswald's interrogation or that Craig identified Oswald as the man who entered the station wagon."

Ten minutes after President Kennedy was shot, Marvin Robinson, Helen Forrest and Dallas Deputy Sheriff Roger Craig, independently of each other, reportedly saw two men leaving Dealey Plaza in a light-colored Rambler station wagon. One of them entered the car on Elm Street after running from the direction of the Texas School Book Depository (TSBD). Craig and Forrest described this man as being identical to Lee Harvey Oswald. A few minutes before this incident, Richard Randolph Carr saw two of three men, who had come from behind the TSBD, enter what was apparently the same Rambler parked next to the building on Houston Street. He saw the third man enter the car seconds later on Record Street, one block east and two blocks south of the TSBD.³

The Warren Commission had Marvin Robinson's and Roger Craig's reports of November 23, 1963. It also had Craig's statement to the FBI from the day before, as well as Carr's statements to the FBI and Craig's testimony. The Commission, however, apparently never knew about Mrs. Forrest and did not publish Robinson's statement.⁴ It chose not to believe that Craig took part in Oswald's interrogation or that Craig identified Oswald as the man who entered the station wagon. Dallas Police Captain Will Fritz, Oswald's interrogator, denied to the Commission that Craig was present. Fritz thus never had to deal with Craig's allegation that Oswald admitted to Fritz that he had indeed left Dealey Plaza in a station wagon belonging to a woman named Mrs. Paine.⁵

Despite the Marvin Robinson statement that corroborated Roger Craig and which the

Commission had, and despite other corroborating evidence such as newspaper photographs showing Craig's presence on Elm Street and at the open door of the interrogation room with Fritz during Oswald's questioning, the Commission chose to believe the contradictory and unsupported testimony of taxi driver William Whaley.⁶ Whaley told the Warren Commission about two witnesses who saw Oswald enter his cab. But there is no indication that the Commission ever attempted to locate, through the simple process of examining the cab company's records, the only two people who could corroborate Whaley.⁷

With the Warren Commission's attempt to hide Marvin Robinson's statement, the death of William Whaley in 1965, and the 1975 death of Roger Craig after his many failed attempts to make his story public, the truth about this alleged getaway car has eluded the few who have tried to seek it.⁸

The House Select Committee on Assassinations (House Committee) apparently attempted but failed. It reported, "Robinson did not testify before the Warren Commission, and he has not been located by the committee." Despite this attempt, however, the House Committee, like the Warren Commission, avoided the entire matter in its report, choosing instead to repeat the

"If one such person decided to reveal the car's secrets, however, how would he do it? Could he do it without being silenced himself? Could he do it in a way that would survive his own death?"

Commission's conclusion that "shortly after the assassination, Oswald boarded a bus, but when the bus got caught in a traffic jam, he disembarked and took a taxicab to his rooming house." In this, as in many other areas of its investigation, the House Committee had it both ways by concluding that "The Warren Commission failed to investigate adequately the possibility of a conspiracy to assassinate the President." Thus leading to the conclusion — voiced in 1980 by authors DeLloyd J. Guth and David R. Wrone — "after careful study of the House Committee *Final Report*, that this most recent official version does not satisfy the need

for a thorough inquiry into what happened that day in Dallas.⁷⁹

Read more about "Roger and Me" by Richard Bartholomew. Part Two will be in our next issue.

¹ David McCullough, *Why We Should Care About History*, O'Neill Memorial Lecture, National Archives, 1993.

² Neil Postman with Charles Weingartner, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, (NY: Delta, 1969), p. 3.

³ House Select Committee on Assassinations, Vol XII, pp. 8-9, 18, (hereafter as 12 HSCA 8-9, 18) cited in Dennis Ford, "A Conspiracy Model and a Conspirator: Predictions and Possible Refutations," *The Third Decade*, (Vol 9, No. 1, Nov. 1992), p. 25; Michael L. Kurtz, *Crime of the Century*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), p. 132; Josiah Thompson, *Six Seconds in Dallas*, (NY: Bernard Geis, 1967; Berkeley, 1976), pp. 303-06, 404-05.

⁴ Jim Marrs, *Crossfire: The Plot That Killed Kennedy*, (NY: Carroll & Graf, 1989), p. 331.

⁵ Warren Commission Report pp. 160-61 (hereafter as WCR 160-61); Mark Lane, *Rush to Judgment*, (NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966) pp. 173-74; Roger Craig, *When They Kill a President*, (unpublished manuscript, 1971), pp. 14, 18; *Two Men in Dallas: John Kennedy and Roger Craig*, 60 minutes, videotape. Narrated by Mark Lane. Alpha Productions, 1977.

⁶ Jesse E. Curry, *Retired Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry reveals his JFK Assassination File*, (American Poster and Printing, 1969), p. 72. Note: Craig never changed his story throughout his life, though apparently others did. This paper's author accepts Craig's own statements as credible and reliable. (See *Two Men in Dallas*, videotape.)

⁷ Kurtz, *Crime of the Century*, pp. 132-33; Robert Groden with Harrison Livingstone, *High Treason*, (NY: Conservatory Press, 1989) p. 162.

⁸ Marrs, *Crossfire*, pp. 332, 560.

⁹ 12 HSCA 18; U.S. Congress, House, The Final Assassinations Report: Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations, U.S. House of Representatives, (NY: Bantam, 1979), p. 56; DeLloyd J. Guth and David R. Wrone, *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: A Comprehensive Historical and Legal Bibliography*,

1963-1979, (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1980), p. xxxiv.

Book Review

OSWALD AND THE CIA

*JOHN NEWMAN, Carroll & Graf, \$28.00 (627p)

This meticulously documented exposé gives the lie to the official CIA position that it had no relationship of any kind with Lee Harvey Oswald, alleged assassin of President John Kennedy. A former U.S. military intelligence officer for 20 years, Newman (*JFK and Vietnam*) relies primarily on newly released government documents made available within the last three years under the JFK Assassination Records Act, passed in 1992, which mandates that the US government make available all its information on this case.

Using CIA, FBI, military and American embassy files to reconstruct Oswald's activities from his 1959 defection to the Soviet Union up until his murder, Newman shows that the CIA was spawning a web of deception about Oswald weeks before the president's murder. For example, the agency has denied that it knew about Oswald's 1963 visits to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City, but Newman refutes this, using interlocking CIA and FBI cables and reports. The evidence presented here, though fragmentary and based on heavily censored and edited documents, strongly suggests that the CIA had a keen operational interest in Oswald, that it kept tabs on him and that Oswald, either willingly, or as a patsy, was deeply involved in CIA operations. CIA documents suggest that the agency had a hand in Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union and monitored his activities there and his return home in June 1962. This heavily annotated tome, which reads like an intricate spy thriller, serves as a corrective to Norman Mailer's *Oswald's Tale*.

*Designates books of unusual interest and merit

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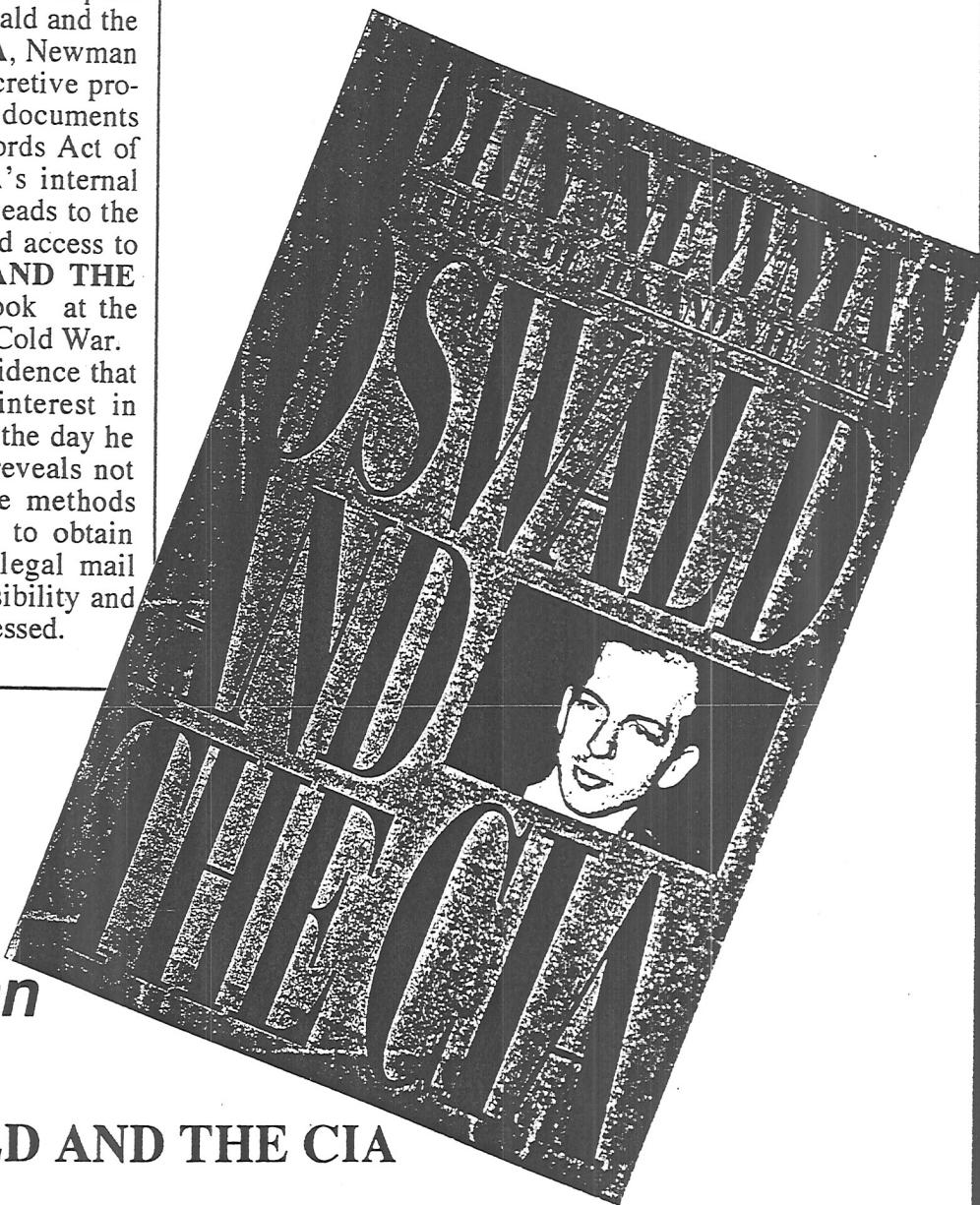
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OSWALD AND THE CIA is John Newman's authoritative and explosive expose of the relationship between Lee Oswald and the CIA. In **OSWALD AND THE CIA**, Newman leads the way through a maze of secretive procedures in the first examination of documents opened to scrutiny by the JFK Records Act of 1992. His investigation of the CIA's internal audit trail provides a road map that leads to the individuals and organizations that had access to Oswald and his file. **OSWALD AND THE CIA** provides a critical insider's look at the most sensitive CIA operations of the Cold War.

Newman discovers ample evidence that the CIA had a keen operational interest in Oswald from the day he defected to the day he died. **OSWALD AND THE CIA** reveals not only sensitive sources but also the methods employed by government agencies to obtain intelligence about Oswald, from illegal mail interception. Now issues of responsibility and accountability can be raised and addressed.

John Newman

OSWALD AND THE CIA



- *How a redeployed from the Soviet Union became increasingly embroiled with targets of the CIA and FBI.*
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